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ABSTRACT

Finding a child care provider who can meet an individual child's needs and provide a nurturing, supportive daily environment can be stressful for parents. This book is designed to ease parents' concerns by explaining the criteria defining quality care, describing what to look for in a child care provider, identifying what to ask a potential provider, and discussing how to be assertive and persistent in keeping care that fits a family's requirements. Part 1 of the book describes the options for child care and defines quality care. Part 2 describes how to find various types of child care, including family child care, center care, part-day programs, care in the child's home, school-age care, and creative alternatives. Part 3 includes discussions of issues related to taking time off after the birth of a child, children's reactions to child care, and handling guilt and anxiety. Part 4 examines how to support the child care provider and the caregiver as a family resource. Part 5 discusses economic issues and part 6 explores advocacy to improve child care conditions. Nine appendices include lists of national support service organizations and child care resource and referral agencies, forms and checklists for parents' use, and suggested readings. (KB)

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